

of the entrance, have been strengthened in order to withstand the extra strain which will fall upon them when the entrance has been closed and the sea excluded. Any who like to follow this up should look at Silcock's Map of the Broad district in Roman times, shewing approximately the areas formerly subject to flooding.

THE ROMAN AND VIKING PERIODS

No sketch of our Coast would be complete without reference to the invasions and settlements of the Romans and the Northmen, which have had such marked effect upon our coast dwellers, their language and disposition.

The Romans first came with Julius Cæsar, in 55 and 54 B.C., but did not stay long either time; they came a third time in A.D. 43, settled down and governed England until the Legions were recalled in 411. During their occupation they erected ten castles at various points on the shore, from the Wash to Portsmouth; two of these were in Suffolk, Garianonum, now Burgh Castle, built on a commanding site by Breydon Water above Yarmouth, and Walton Castle, now under the sea near Felixstowe. They were under the control of the Count of the Saxon Shore, a Roman Official appointed to guard the Coast, with jurisdiction from Brancaster in Norfolk to Shoreham in Sussex. As will be seen, ours has always been an exposed coast liable to sudden attacks from the Continent, in later times we had a Keeper of the Ports, a Custodian of the Seacoast, Admiral of the Northern Fleet, etc.

Dr. Raven, author of a "History of Suffolk," was of opinion that Dunwich was the site of the Roman Sitomargus, mentioned in Route ix. of the Roman Itinerary, and as a boy I was with him when he made the survey which satisfied him of the correctness of this theory, which is supported by

the Victoria County History. However that may be, all traces of any Roman station there must have long since vanished beneath the waves.

To the Romans must be accorded the credit of the first survey of the Suffolk coast, that made by Ptolemy in the time of the Emperor Hadrian, who reigned A.D. 117 to 138. He fixed the most easterly point of England at a spot called "Extensio" which has been identified with the now vanished Easton Ness (Estuna in the Domesday Map), and lay about a mile north of Southwold. Maps of 200 years ago shew that by then Easton Ness had been cut back behind Lowestoft, which is still the most easterly point of Suffolk and England.

Among the Mercenaries brought to England to serve in the legions were numbers of Saxons, and it is likely that they brought their women over with them, and eventually settled here about the third century; at any rate, after the Romans departed and the country was left at the mercy of the Celts, Picts, and the North Sea Pirates, the more civilized inhabitants invited the help of the continental Saxons, and they came in such numbers that by the year 600 the Saxons from Holstein and Angles from Sleswick, across the water, had firmly established themselves all along the East Coast, and in another two centuries England had become a Saxon Kingdom. The Saxons gave us the suffix "TON," meaning a home-stead or farm, and see how our shore teems with them—Gorleston, Hopton, Corton, Newton (washed away about 1350), Gunton, Easton, Leiston, Westleton, Boyton, Kirton, Walton, etc.

But already the true Vikings from Denmark and Norway, the boldest and hardest sea-farers of all time, had turned their attention to England, and had descended upon its shores in 793 and 794. At first they came as robbers, then as settlers, and finally as conquerors, and for two centuries they bulk

large in the history of East Engle, for by this time the ancient name Britain had become England, and the eastern part is always so-called in the Sagas, while Wales remained Bretland, or land of the Britons to the Norsemen.

The Vikings, and indeed all mariners of those days, only went to sea in the summer time, in quest of fame and plunder, but generally returned home in the autumn with their booty, and spent the winter at home feasting while the Skalds glorified their scandalous proceedings in Sagas.

The custom was to sail Westward from Norway or Denmark until they made the English land, then to coast along until they found a suitable river or creek, which the boats would ascend until a convenient landing-place was found, probably out of sight of the sea, but near enough to enable the Vikings to dash out upon any unfortunate ship which might pass that way ; they would then construct a Naust, or Dock, in which to moor their longships, with an earthwork to serve as a fort for the guard, which was one-third of their force, after these arrangements were complete they would proceed to plunder the whole district within reach.

I will describe one such snug harbour on the Suffolk coast which Mr. Claude Morley and I located in 1924. We were aware that in Domesday, Froxenden, i.e. Frostenden, a small village between Southwold and Lowestoft, was recorded as being a Sea-port (*Portus Maris*) and having a *Salina* or Salt-work, indicative hereabouts of a fishing place ; accordingly we followed the course of the old Frostenden river from Potter's Bridge on the Lowestoft Road, about two miles north of Southwold, and prospecting around in the vicinity of the brickyard, we followed a footpath over the river, now dwindled to a ditch, and came upon a semicircular terrace of higher ground jutting out into the marsh, which at once suggested to me the site of the ancient quay, and looking north I pointed

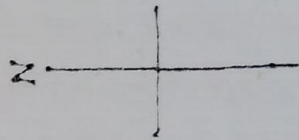
out at that end unmistakable signs of a Dock having been dug out, whereupon we decided to explore, and, very soon, I heard my antiquarian friend hailing in excited tones; hurrying up I found him on a mound at the head of the Dock, which he announced to be a Danish earthwork.

Further careful examination has established this beyond a doubt. The Earthwork proved to be oval, 34 paces from east to west, and 23 from north to south, surrounded by a ditch, 227 paces round, the bottom being 10 to 11 feet below the summit of the mound. The ground on the land side rises somewhat boldly to the higher cultivated land, which makes the ditch appear much deeper that side, and it is evident that when made the ditch connected with the dock, and that the fort was surrounded by a wet moat. Further inquiries have elicited that a spring on the land-side formerly kept the ditch wet, and had been piped away within living memory. I was also assured that the work was formerly much higher, having been ploughed down for farming purposes, but for these changes I should say the site is much as the Danes left it 1,000 years ago, when no doubt the whole district was dense forest; and this would be a most secluded little haven, and yet within three miles of the sea.

It is considered by many that in remote times the flow of the N. Sea tidal wave was five feet higher than at the present time, but however that may be, I have shewn you how the cutting away of the Norfolk and Suffolk Coast and the formation of the Wold and Hasbro Gat Channels have led to an offset of the main tidal stream, and caused a difference of rise between Cromer and Southwold of some 8 feet, so it is demonstrable that at the Danish era high water at Easton Broad was at least five feet higher than now, and that the Frostenden Valley would then be navigable some miles at tide time. The Broad is all that is left of a tidal estuary, like Breydon Water, and this, with the water flowing up the valley

Frostenden Parish

South Cove
Parish



FROSTENDEN HARBOUR

(Block by courtesy of the Suffolk Archaeological Society)
A—Old River. B—Dock. C—Site of Quay. D—Moat. E—Mound. F—Approach. G—Present River.

nearly to Wrentham, would be ample to keep a good channel for shipping. There is, just north of Easton, a grown-up Broad, known as Covehithe Broad, which in old times evidently formed part of the Estuary, and when the tides began to shrink and the Frostenden Quay to silt up, a Hithe or landing-place was built by John de Cove about 1308, and gave the name to Covehithe, formerly North Hales.

When the erosion of the coast set in, and the beach began to travel from north to south, the Easton channel was turned southerly, like the Yare and Alde to-day, and the Blyth up to 1590, and worked its way alongshore in front of Easton cliff, then, when this channel reached the valley between Easton and Southwold, it was forced through by the sea and formed Buss Creek, which you pass over going into Southwold, the water then found its way round the back of Southwold Hill and ran in and out with the Blyth. Later, by some alteration in the coastline, or heavy gales, the Easton channel beached up, Easton Broad was formed, and the fate of Easton, Covehithe and Frostenden was sealed.

This most interesting Earthwork was not shewn upon any Ordnance or Estate Maps, but I have taken care that it shall be shewn on the Revised Ordnance; meantime Sheet 88 of the one-inch Ordnance is the proper map for reference. I came upon the following in the Epic of Beowulf, the earliest known Anglo-Saxon Saga, and it seems that it might well apply to Frostenden:

"He went in his Sea boat . . .
To move the deep water, he forsook the Danes land,
Nor did the wind over the waters hinder,
The Wave-floater; The Sea-goer went,
The foamy-necked floater, forth over the sea,
The curved prow sailed over the Ocean currents
Until they could see the cliffs of the Geats,
The well-known nesses. The vessel pressed up,
Urged by the wind it stood on the land,
Soon was the Harbour Guard ready at the strand
Who long had gazed far over the sea
Eager for the coming of the dear men."

Carrying the idea still further, I found that a Dr. Haigh, an East Anglian scholar, published in 1861, "*Anglo-Saxon Sagas Examined*," in which he suggests that when Beowulf set forth on his historic voyage, with fifteen champions, "in the good wave traverser" to slay the giant Grendel, he sailed from Covehithe, but it does not appear that the Doctor was aware that within a couple of miles lay conclusive proof that the Northmen used the harbour of Frostenden, by Covehithe, as far back as Beowulf days (eighth century). The extract quoted above might well apply to the Hero's return past the well-known Nesses of Lowestoft, Covehithe and Easton, and the Harbour Guard might have been established in the moated Danework.

Other traces of the Danes remain in the suffix "wick," meaning a creek for shipping, which we find in the neighbouring places of Walberswick and Dunwich, also at Harwich, Ipswich, Keswick, etc.; but the Danish suffix "by," although so frequent in East Norfolk, only occurs in four Suffolk villages, Wilby, Risby, Barnby and Ashby, only the two last being near the coast; the meaning is a farm or village. However, Danish personal names are found in plenty along the coast, such as Haken, Sagin, Rolf (Ralph), Cragie, Kettle, Thurtell, Upcraft and others.

A Cartulary of about 1237, from Butley Abbey, now in the Bodleian Library, quoted in vol. ii. of Suckling, sets out the owners of wreck along our coast, and incidentally names several of our little lost sea-ports which were frequented by the Danes.

NORMAN TIMES

After the Conquest England's chief trade was with the Continent. It was largely conducted from the East Coast Ports, and Suffolk enjoyed a considerable share of it. The